

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
EASTERN DIVISION

IN THE MATTER OF THE CRIMINAL
COMPLAINT OF:

RONALD E. LIDDERDALE

Case No. 2:25-mj-270

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF
A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT AND ARREST WARRANT

I, Brock Flint, being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I am a Special Agent (SA) with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and assigned to the Columbus Resident Agency of the Cincinnati Field Office. I have been employed as a Special Agent since March 17, 2019, and have participated in numerous investigations. I am presently assigned to the Joint Terrorism Task Force, based in Columbus, Ohio. Before my employment with the FBI, I was an Explosive Ordnance Disposal specialist with the United States Air Force specializing in Improvised Explosive Devices and was a certified HAZMAT technician. I have an undergraduate degree in Security and Intelligence focused on terrorism. I have worked numerous investigations focused on crimes committed using social media and other Internet mediums.

2. I have conducted and participated in investigations that involved the use of advanced investigative techniques such as the use of: Title III interceptions; confidential human sources; consensually monitored meetings; execution of search warrants on computers, emails, other electronic communication devices and physical structures; pen register and trap/trace devices; financial record analysis; and physical surveillance. During these investigations, I have

participated in monitoring court authorized wire interceptions, conducted consensually recorded conversations, conducted witness interviews, analyzed telephone toll data, and analyzed documents such as legislation and financial records.

3. The facts in this affidavit come from various sources, including my personal observations and knowledge of the investigation, my training, experience, and information obtained from other law enforcement personnel and from persons with knowledge regarding relevant facts and witnesses. This affidavit is intended to show merely that there is sufficient probable cause to find that violations of 18 U.S.C. § 875(c), interstate communications with a threat to kidnap or injure, 18 U.S.C. § 876, mailing threatening communications, 18 U.S.C. § 1038(a)(1), false information and hoaxes, and 18 U.S.C. § 2261A(2), cyberstalking, (together, the TARGET OFFENSES) have been committed, in support of the requested criminal complaint and arrest warrant.

4. Since this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing an arrest warrant and criminal complaint, your affiant did not include each and every fact known concerning this investigation. Your affiant has set forth only the facts that are believed to be necessary to establish probable cause that Ronald E. Lidderdale (“LIDDERDALE”) committed the violations listed above.

PROBABLE CAUSE

5. The United States, along with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, is investigating the serial mailing of threatening communications primarily targeting Ohio-based public officials. Some of the letters contained a suspicious white powder. As described in further detail below, one

of the letters contained a 9mm ammunition round with the last name of Public Official 1¹ inscribed on it, in a letter addressed to Public Official 1. The investigation concerns possible violations of, inter alia, the TARGET OFFENSES.

6. In July 2024, the FBI began investigating threatening letters received by Ohio government officials via United States Postal Services (USPS) mail. Between approximately July and early August, the FBI identified 12 such letters, which were sent in five separate mailings. The letters contained similar language, formatting, and other indicators supporting a logical assessment that the letters were very likely created by the same threat actor, or group of threat actors. The return labels on the letters included mailing information for individuals who were either currently or previously employed by the targeted government official.

7. In September 2024, the FBI began investigating threatening emails sent to some of the same individuals who received the threatening letters via USPS. The FBI assessed, based on the similar language used in both the emails and the letters, combined with the similar recipients of both the emails and the letters, that the emails were likely sent by the same threat actor who mailed the letters. In this month alone, there were approximately 14 emails sent, and the emails were sent from approximately seven Proton Mail email addresses, many of which bore similarities to each other. These emails were sent to many of the same people who had already received

¹ For purposes of this affidavit, the identities of the recipients of the communications in this case have been redacted. The recipients of the communications in this case include publicly elected officials holding statewide office in Ohio, elected officials holding office in the federal government, and individuals involved in Ohio politics. Additionally, law enforcement agencies and at least one media outlet also received communications.

threatening letters and who later, during the course of this investigation, were discovered to also receive white powder letters or other threatening communications.

8. Starting on November 6, 2024, and continuing to the present, the FBI began investigating reports of government officials receiving threatening letters via USPS containing a suspicious white powder. The letters included death threats, and some stated the letter contained a Ricin toxin² or mysterious white powders that would cause them “misery.” The return address labels on the letters contained the names and addresses of various individuals in the Columbus, Ohio area.

9. As of April 2, 2025, the FBI had identified 49 letters containing a suspicious white powder, sent in 9 batches. These letters, similar to the initial threatening letters sent in July and August of 2024, had postal markings indicating they were processed out of the Columbus USPS sorting facility.

10. According to USPS officials, the Columbus USPS sorting facility processes the vast majority of mail picked up by mail carriers in the central Ohio region, while the Cincinnati USPS sorting facility processes mail picked up in the southern Ohio region, and the Cleveland USPS sorting facility processes mail picked up in the northern Ohio region. As such, FBI believes the USPS likely ingested the letters into the mail stream from post offices or post office drop boxes in the central Ohio area.

² I know from my training and experience that Ricin is a toxic substance that, if ingested, inhaled, or injected, may cause severe health consequences, including in some cases, death. Ricin can be processed into a white powder form that would enhance the likelihood of a victim unwittingly inhaling the substance.

11. All of the letters alluded to the sender's intent to commit acts of violence against the letters' addressed recipients. They all bear a similar typeface, similar envelopes, similar return address labels, and possess similar themes that would only be known to investigators and to the sender.

12. The following is a list with some examples, and some images, from the July and August mailings:

- a. July 11, 2024, letter addressed to Public Official 2.^{3,4}

³ Seven letters in total were postmarked on July 11, 2024.

⁴ The images of the letters included in this affidavit have been cropped to remove identifying information about the victims in this case.

I need you to understand the main reason why you are receiving this letter.

You have consistently, indifferently and arrogantly put yourself and others like you above the People.

Eyes will always be following you while you are at home, at the statehouse and just being out.

Respect the will of Voters by not ignoring the democratic values this state/nation were founded on.

If not, you will see results of continued disrespect towards our state, nation and the People above all.

There will be no second chances.

The first and only chance after continued selfishness will result in some way that maims you.

The final result will be from a bullet fired by my gun penetrating your skull with little warning.

A thanks should be in order for the permitless carry law that you and others were so GUNg ho to pass.

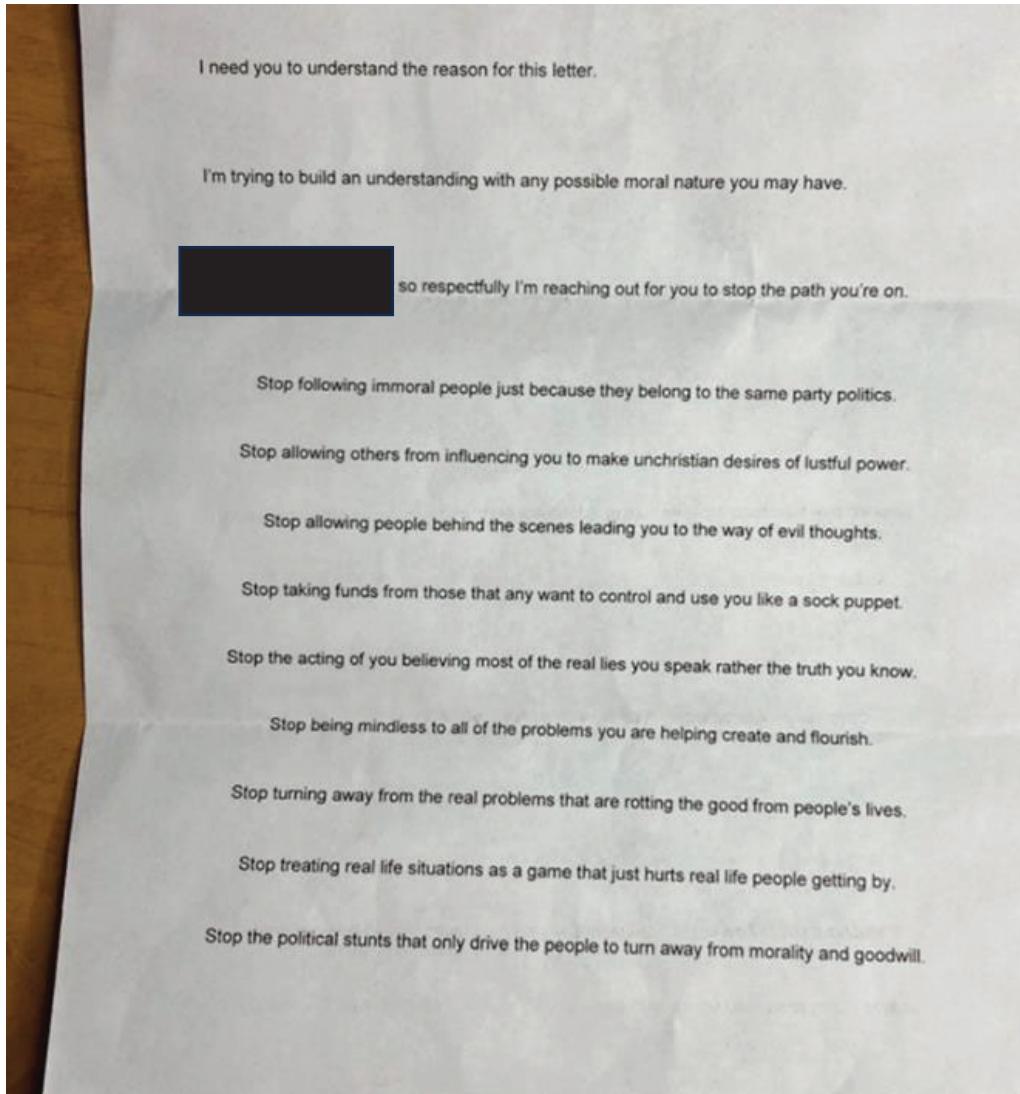
Heed my warning.

For your own safety and to maintain that God gifted precious life; follow the will of the People.

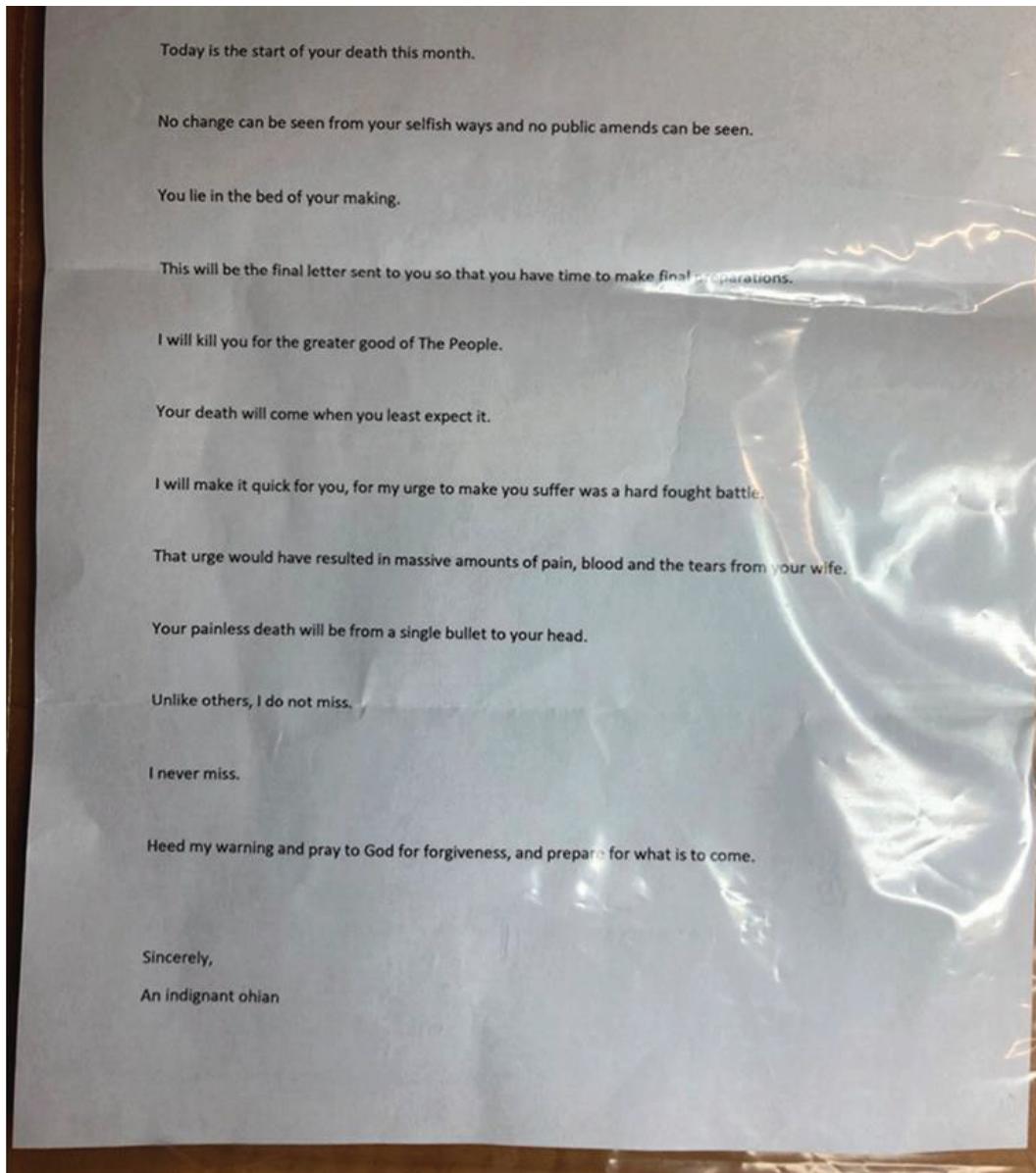
Sincerely,

A tired Ohioan

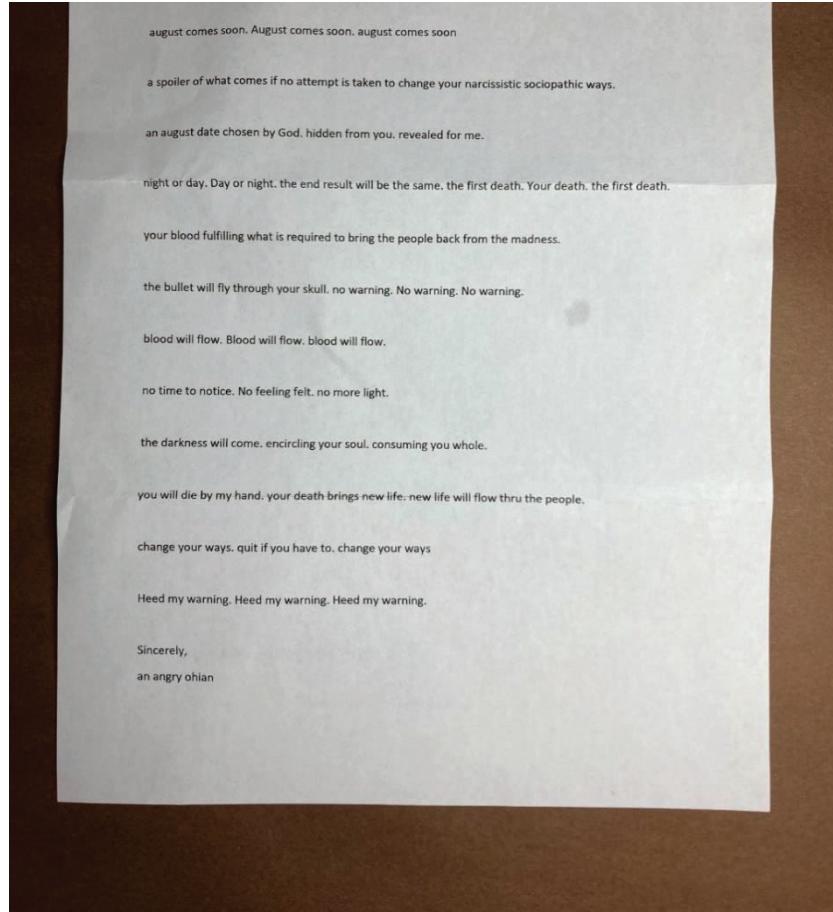
b. July 15, 2024, letter addressed to Public Official 3.



c. July 17, 2024, letter addressed to Public Official 1.

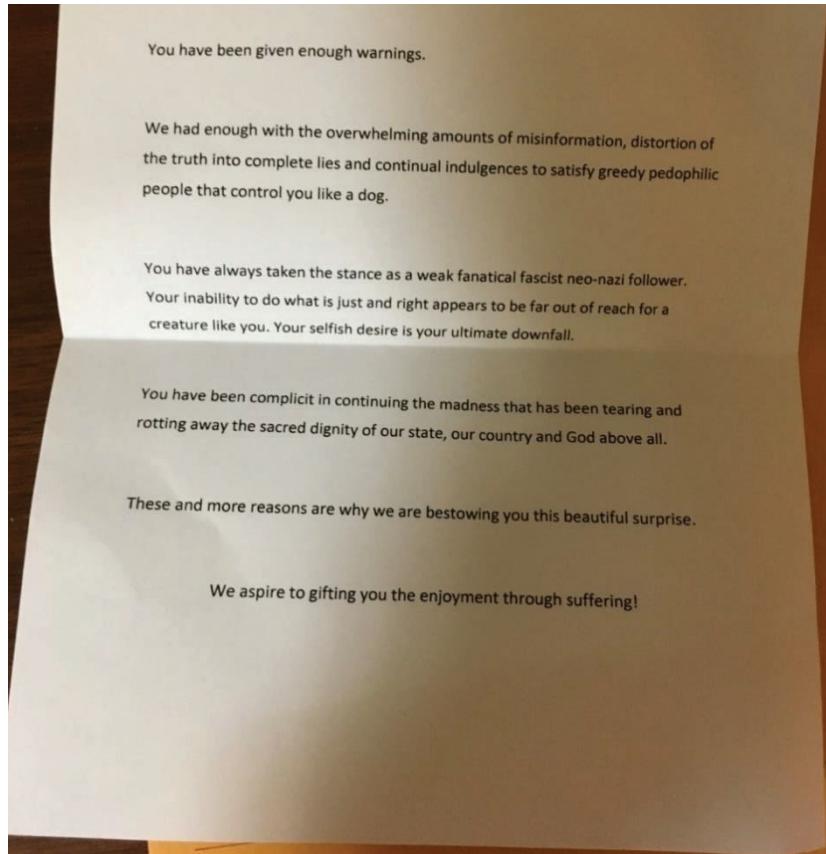


d. July 23, 2024, letter addressed to Public Official 1.



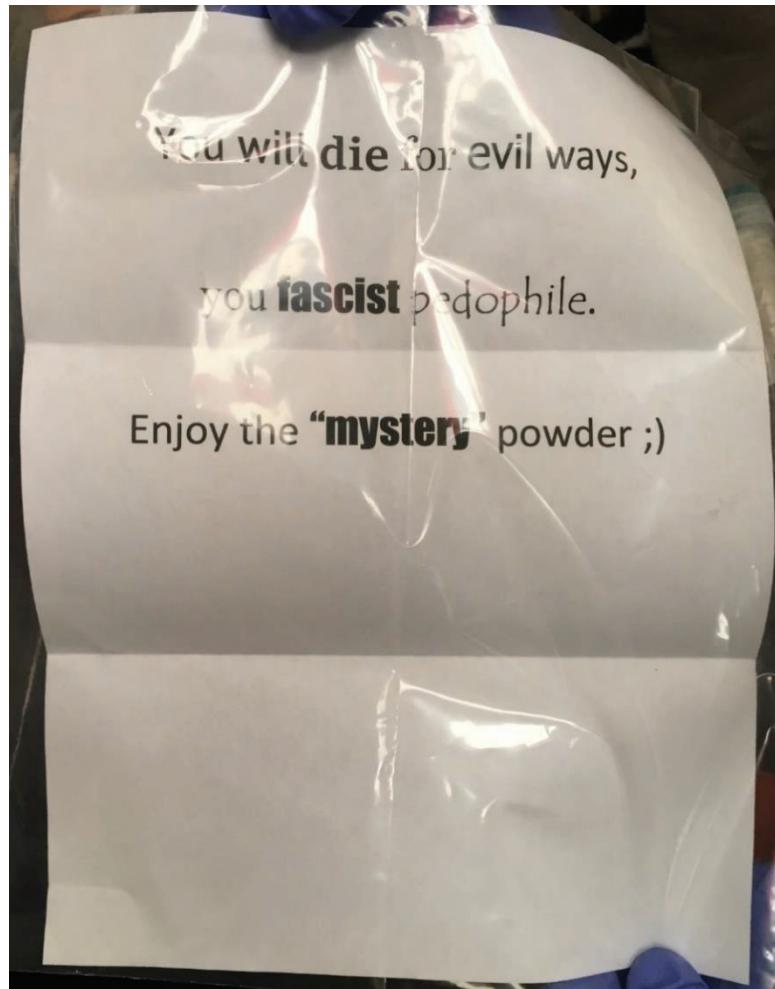
13. The following is a list with some examples, and some images, of the white powder letters that began in November 2024. To date, there are 29 victims who have received white powder letters, including individuals holding statewide office in Ohio and representing Ohio or parts of Ohio in the Ohio state government or in the federal government. The sender utilized multiple return label addressees throughout the mailings.

- a. Letter to Public Official 1 received November 5, 2024.

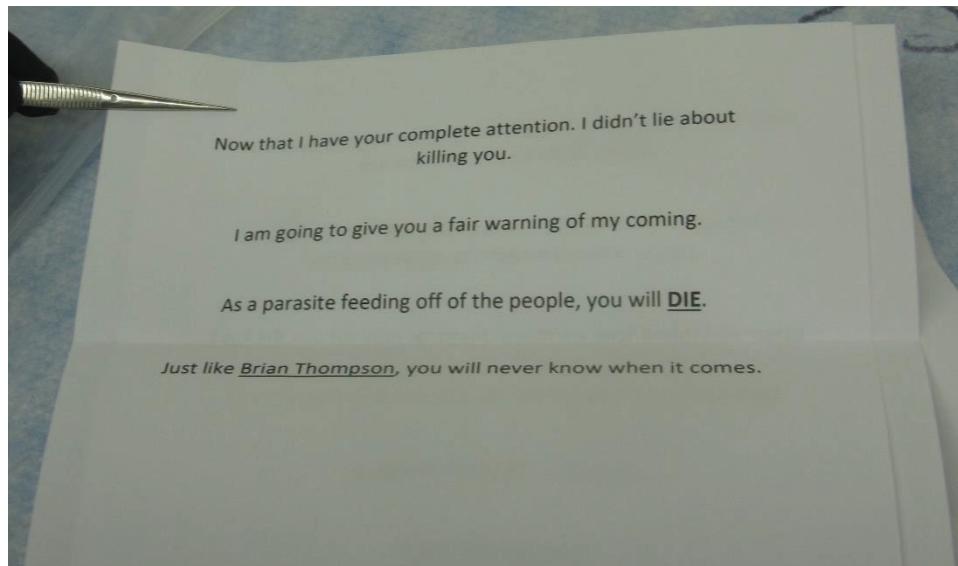
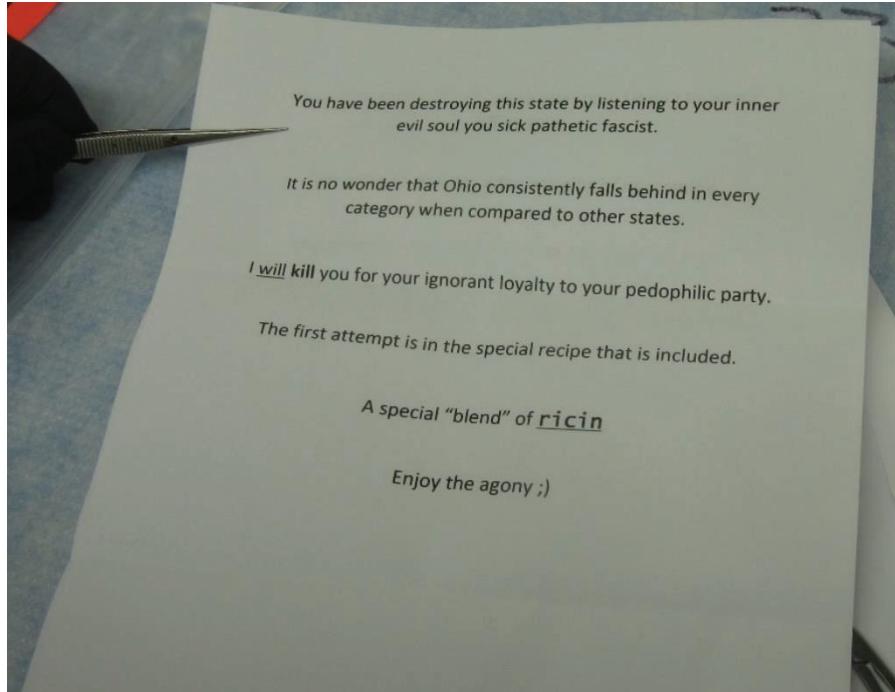


- b. December 6, 2024, letter to Public Official 2.⁵

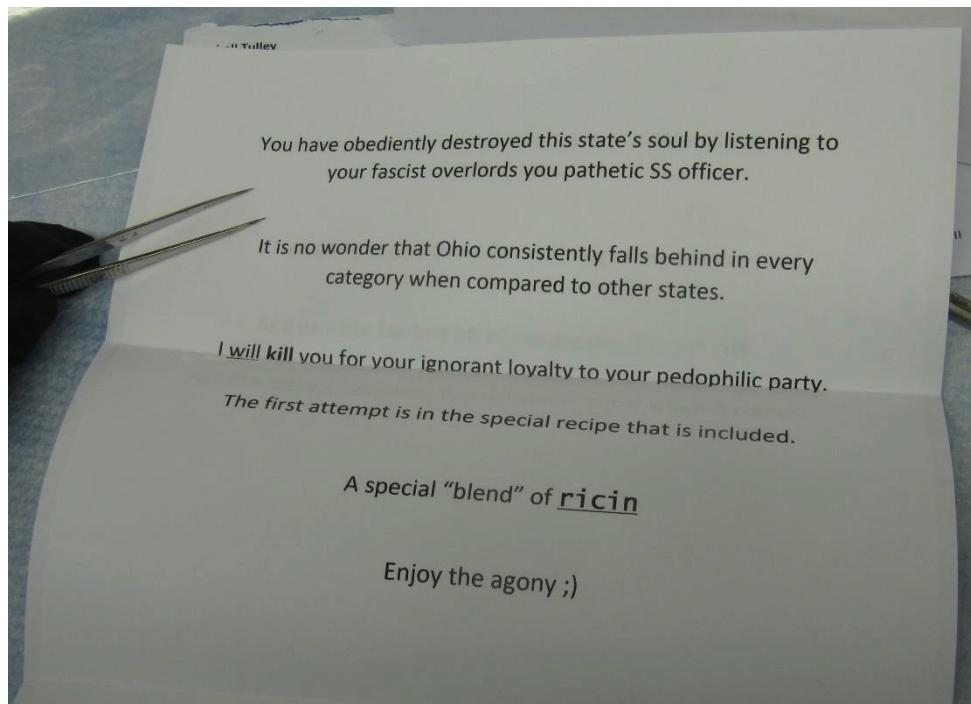
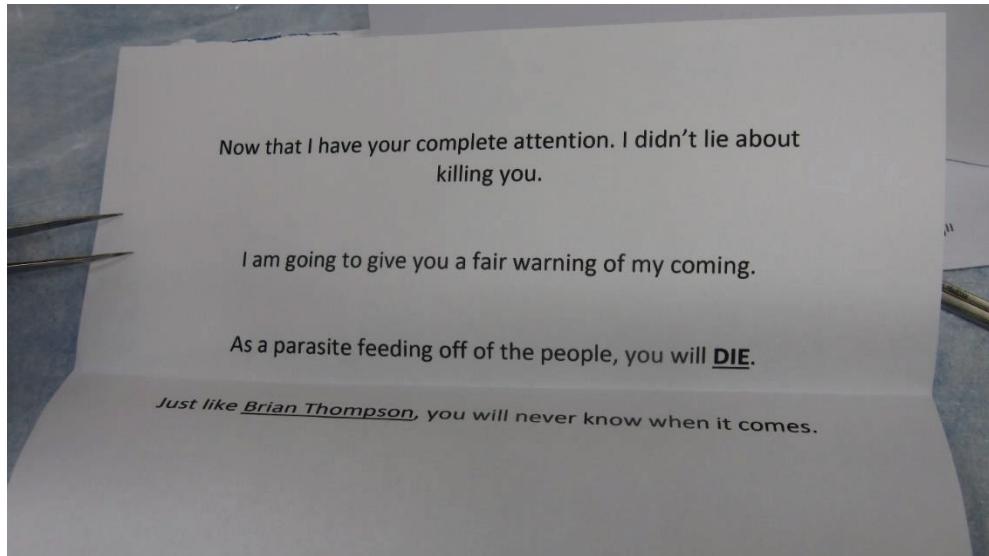
⁵ Six letters in total were postmarked on December 6, 2024.



c. December 12, 2024, letters addressed to Public Official 1 and Public Official 1's spouse.

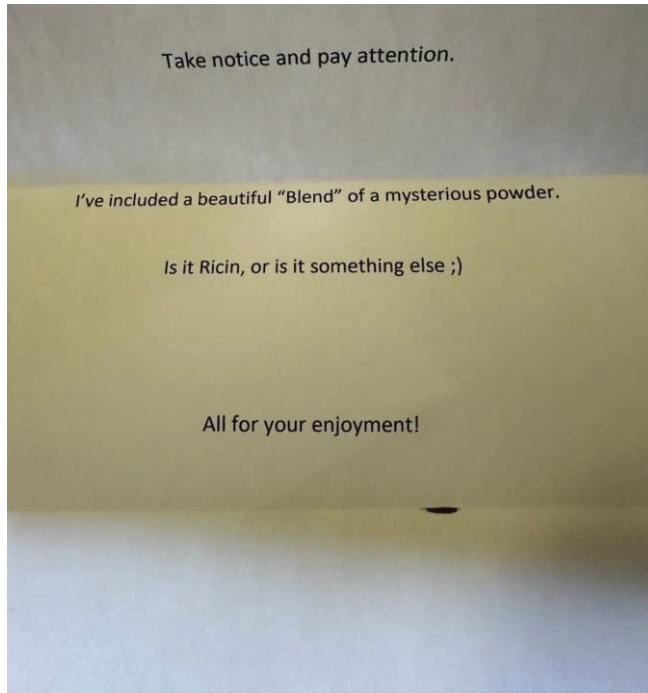


d. December 12, 2024, letters addressed to Public Official 3 and Public Official 3's spouse.⁶



⁶ Both mailings contained the same two-page letter.

- e. December 19, 2024, letter addressed to Public Official 4 and Public Official 4's spouse.⁷



- f. January 2, 2025, letter to Public Official 5.⁸
- g. January 10, 2025, letter to Public Official 6.⁹
- h. January 17, 2025, letter to Public Official 7.¹⁰
- i. February 3, 2025, letter to addressed to Public Official 1 and Public Official 1's spouse.¹¹

⁷ Six letters in total were postmarked on December 19, 2024.

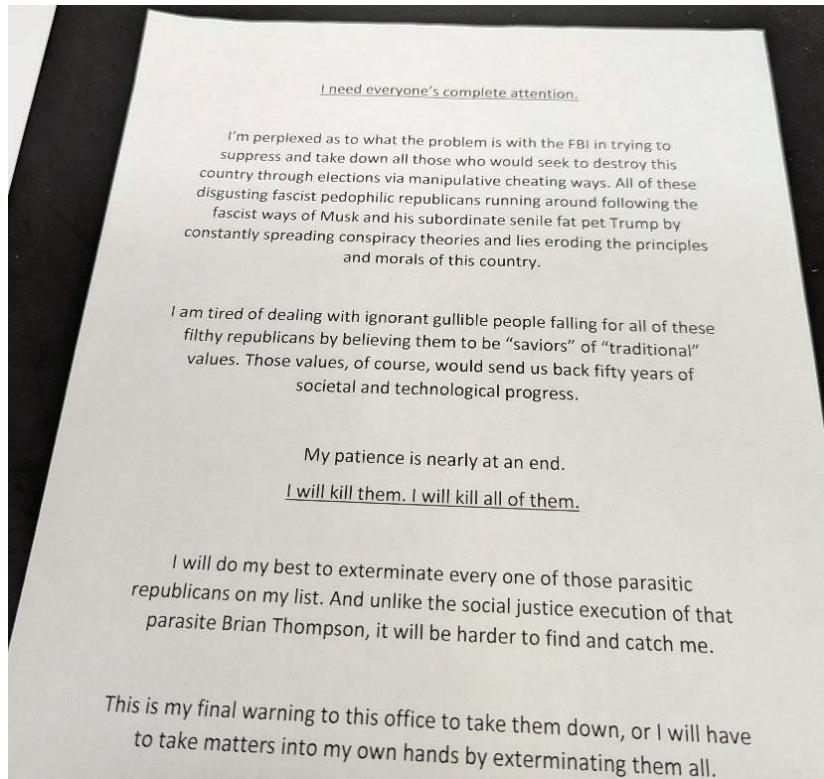
⁸ Five letters in total were postmarked on January 2, 2025.

⁹ Three letters in total were postmarked on January 10, 2025.

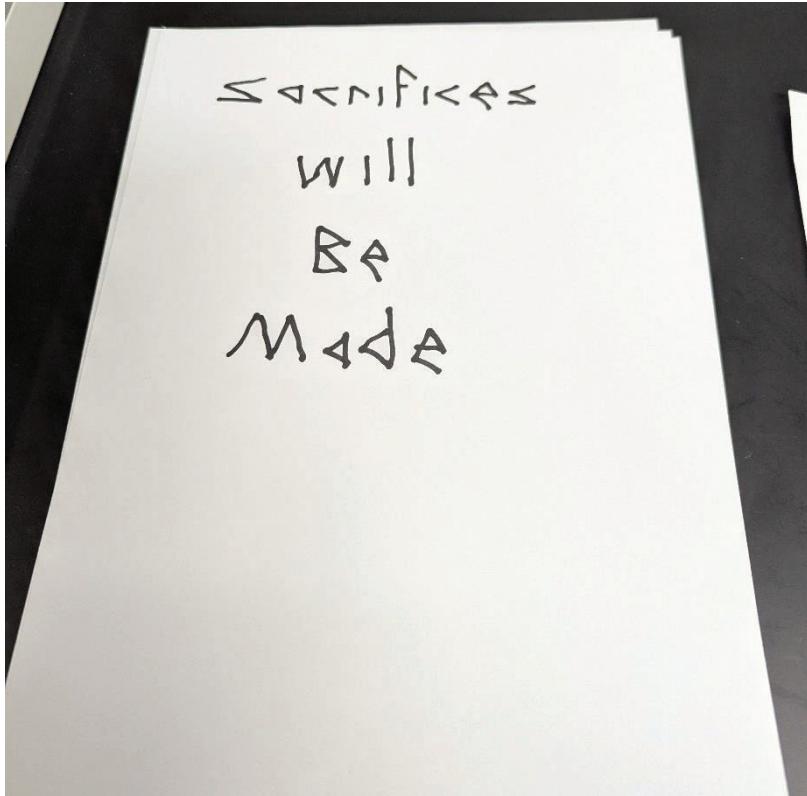
¹⁰ Ten letters in total were postmarked on January 17, 2025.

¹¹ Six letters in total were postmarked on February 3, 2025.

- j. February 11, 2025, letter addressed to the news department of a Columbus, Ohio news station.
- k. Letter addressed to Cincinnati FBI Field Office and received February 13, 2025.¹²



¹² Similar letters were received by FBI offices in Columbus and Cleveland, also with no postmark.



14. As of May 7, 2025, additional letters have been received threatening some of the same individuals as previous mailings and expressing a desire to kill Public Official 1. One such letter, mailed on April 22, 2025 to Public Official 1's Office contained a round of 9mm firearm ammunition, which had Public Official 1's last name inscribed on the round. According to United States Postal Investigative Service (USPIS), the stamps on the envelope to the Attorney General's Office were hand-canceled at the United States Post Office located at 260 South State Street Westerville, Ohio. The individuals on the return labels on some of the letters were previously used by the sender in other correspondence identified in this investigation.

15. In an email sent from a Proton Mail account to Public Official 7 on September 12, 2024, the sender stated that "Each [victim] will receive the gift of their names etched onto a single bullet. Their skull is the target the bullet is the gift."

16. On April 29, 2025, letters were sent to eight individuals containing a hit list of eight individuals the sender stated they would be coming to kill in the month of May. In the letters, the sender stated they would see those eight individuals bleed, and they would start with Public Official 1. Based on the evidence, including the characteristics and language used in the letters, investigators believe that the same individual who had sent these letters had sent the prior communications. The eight letters had postal markings indicating they were processed out of the Columbus USPS sorting facility. These letters all contained a return addressee, which was the same name used by the sender in recent email correspondence with investigators.¹³

¹³ Eight letters were sent out, and all of the letters contained the same return addressee and the same letter with the hit list.

For those on my first list, I write this to all of you.

For some time now I have been able to hold back my urges to killing all the republican parasites on my list. All of the turmoil, chaos and complete inhumane behaviors I have witnessed have forced my hand to break all of my stance against killing. Seeing how all of you republicans are actively attempting to destroy the constitution and reimagine it based on outdated archaic "principles" has snapped my bloodthirst into action.

But it all truly comes down to your inherent fetish desire of sadistic control. Control over things that you are too ignorant or scared to face or understand. Two words have easily come to mind in describing all republicans, "Pathetically Weak". Too weak to stand up for true moral principles instead of becoming little ass hungry lap dogs to that malformed trump. It has been disgusting to observe the pathetic groveling to do his will. Just to let you know what that looks like before I eventually kill you. It is called subservience/servitude. That is not the behavior of TRUE citizens of the United States. It's completely un-American behavior as it reeks of Monarchy.

So, I will show you what strength is. I will show you what it means to sacrifice for the greatness of this Country. I will show everyone in this state and country the importance of what it means to stand up to veiled fascism. I will kill all of you on my list. The first, of course, is the pussy [REDACTED] I will breathe a sigh of relief once I blow his/your fucking brains out all over his/your floor. The second is that little pathetic malformed under bite fascist wannabe, [REDACTED]. I will have no issue targeting that piece of shit in the temple. Blood will flow from each of my bullets. I am coming. I am coming to kill all of you. See all of you soon.

And for [REDACTED], I will see you bleed next month ;)

17. In coordination with an anticipated delivery of the above letters, the sender sent electronic communications to various victims, often using the victim's online submission form portal. Based on my training and experience and my knowledge of the investigation, I know that many public officials, as well as other public facing entities, such as news companies, have an

online portal where individuals can make online anonymous submissions. In these electronic communications, the sender threatened to kill the victim.

18. Additionally, separate electronic communications were sent to the FBI's National Terrorism Operations Center (NTOC) and the Columbus Police Department, warning that the sender was planning to kill Public Official 1 and others. In these submissions the person identified himself, using the same name as the return addressee, referenced above in paragraph 16. In these communications, the sender claimed responsibility for the threatening letters and emails. The email submission to NTOC contained information only known to investigators and the sender of the threats. The individual stated, "I am reaching out in the spirit of communication pertaining to the my past threats made to certain Ohio Politicians; [Public Official 1], [Public Official 3] and various Ohio assembly representatives as an example."

19. Based on all of the evidence gathered during this investigation, including the communications themselves and evidence gathered about the circumstances under which the communications were sent, on or about May 6, 2025, investigators obtained a search warrant to an electronic service provider for the identity of an online user that investigators believed was a person of interest in the investigation. The data obtained as a result of the search warrant investigation identified LIDDERDALE as the user. The electronic service provider also provided an associated telephone number for LIDDERDALE.

20. Investigators have reviewed evidence gathered during this investigation in an effort to identify any information which would corroborate, or eliminate, LIDDERDALE as the sender of the communications sent during the roughly past year, as discovered during this investigation. Some of the corroborating evidence is described below.

21. One of the white powder letters was mailed on February 11, 2025 to a local Columbus Ohio news company. Upon recent review of camera footage taken on that mailing date near the post office from which that letter was sent, the FBI observed an individual driving a Hyundai Elantra with the Ohio license plate JFY1312 at the mailboxes at the post office located at 393 East Orange Street, Lewis Center, Ohio. Investigation revealed that the vehicle is registered to LIDDERDALE. Surveillance initiated on LIDDERDALE on May 6, 2025 identified LIDDERDALE driving a Hyundai Elantra with the same license plate.

22. As indicated above, on April 22, 2025, a letter containing a bullet was mailed to Public Official 1's office. In consultation with USPIS, the FBI identified the mailing location for this letter as the post office located at 260 S State St, Westerville, Ohio. Furthermore, upon recent review, the vehicle bearing Ohio license plate JFY1312, belonging to LIDDERDALE, was also observed by traffic cameras transiting near that post office on the date of the mailing of that letter.

23. On December 18, 2024, lookups were conducted on a website known to the affiant, which provides information about Ohio residents. The searches were done for an individual at 6:14:02 and 6:15:28 pm from an IP address known to the affiant. According to information from the electronic service provider as to LIDDERDALE's online activity, LIDDERDALE accessed his account from the same IP address at 6:14:14 and 6:56:05 pm. On the following day, December 19, 2024, a letter containing white powder was sent to the home of the individual whose information was searched on the aforementioned website. Similar matching IP information was found for LIDDERDALE for searches for other recipients of threatening communications in this case.

24. On April 28, 2025, the office of a publicly elected official in Ohio received a submission via its online portal from an IP address that is known to the affiant. The submission

was transmitted at 7:01 pm. According to information from the electronic service provider as to LIDDERDALE's online activity, LIDDERDALE logged into his account for the electronic service provider from the same IP address six minutes earlier.

25. On May 1, 2025, FBI received an electronic submission sent via NTOC's online portal. The message in the submission conveyed that the sender, identifying himself with the same name referenced in paragraphs 16 and 18 above, wished to kill certain politicians in Ohio. The sender further elaborated that their patience was ending and reiterated their wish to kill those politicians. The sender provided a Proton Mail email address with his submission. According to data from Proton Mail, the IP address used to create this email was an IP address that is known to the affiant, and the message was transmitted at approximately 10:39 am utilizing an iPhone. According to information from the electronic service provider as to LIDDERDALE's online activity, LIDDERDALE logged into his account with the electronic service provider approximately three minutes later, utilizing the same IP address and using an iPhone.

26. On May 2, 2025, the FBI responded to the aforementioned May 1, 2025 communication it received. The FBI offered to speak with the sender. The sender replied to the FBI's emails over the course of numerous days. After corresponding with the FBI, the sender on May 7, 2025 agreed to call the FBI on the following morning. On the next morning, May 8, 2025, the sender did call the FBI and agreed to meet with the FBI at its office in Columbus, Ohio. During these telephone communications, the sender used a phone with the same phone number as the phone number identified as LIDDERDALE's by the electronic service provider.

27. On the morning of May 8, 2025, the sender, LIDDERDALE drove his Hyundai Elantra vehicle, with Ohio license plate JFY1312, to the FBI office in Columbus. He was provided with *Miranda* warnings, and after receiving the warnings, he spoke with investigators. In his

statement to investigators, LIDDERDALE admitted to sending threatening communications to Ohio officials, including Public Official 1. He also admitted to many characteristics of the crime, known only to the perpetrator and investigators. LIDDERDALE admitted to sending the threatening letters in July 2024, sending the threatening communications using the Proton Mail email addresses (LIDDERDALE indicated he couldn't remember the precise email addresses he used to send the older threatening communications sent via Proton Mail email), sending the white powder letters, and sending the letter to Public Official 1 with the bullet with Public Official 1's last name carved into it. LIDDERDALE indicated that his intent was to incite fear, including the fear of bodily injury, and to make threats. He indicated that he understood that he was making threats to cause bodily injury. He also claimed that his larger goal was to change behavior. LIDDERDALE indicated that he wore gloves when preparing the letters. He also indicated that he used supplies in his central Ohio home, the address of which is known to the affiant, including kitchen supplies, to prepare the powder that was included in the white powder letters. LIDDERDALE indicated that he carved Public Official 1's name into a bullet using a screwdriver. LIDDERDALE also indicated that initially he obtained mailing supplies from his employer and then purchased stamps at the post office. LIDDERDALE indicated that he had two firearms and that they were located at his central Ohio home. He also indicated that he had ammunition at the same home and he used a round of ammunition from that collection of ammunition to carve the name of Public Official 1 into the round, which he then sent to Public Official 1.

28. Thus far, the FBI has identified at least 65 threatening communications, including approximately 49 letters including white powder, that LIDDERDALE transmitted to approximately 34 victims between July 2024 and the present.

29. Based on the facts set forth in the Affidavit, I submit that there is probable cause to believe that Ronald E. LIDDERDALE did commit violations of 18 U.S.C. § 875(c), interstate communications with a threat to kidnap or injure, 18 U.S.C. § 876, mailing threatening communications, 18 U.S.C. § 1038(a)(1), false information and hoaxes, and 18 U.S.C. § 2261A(2), cyberstalking. Therefore, your affiant respectfully requests this court issue a criminal complaint and arrest warrant for LIDDERDALE.

Respectfully submitted,

Brock Flint

BROCK FLINT
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subscribed and sworn to before me on May 8, 2025


Kimberly A. Johnson
United States Magistrate Judge

